

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (original) An expansion tube having a plurality of expansion slits formed along a longitudinal direction on the outer peripheral surface thereof, each of the expansion slits having a predetermined width and a relatively larger length than the predetermined width.
2. (original) An expansion tube according to claim 1, wherein each of the plurality of expansion slits is in a generally rectangular shape.
3. (original) An expansion tube according to claim 1, wherein each of the plurality of expansion slits has a width in a range of 1 mm to 3 mm.
4. (original) An expansion tube according to claim 1, wherein each of the plurality of expansion slits has a larger length in a range of 2.5 times to 5 times than the width thereof.
5. (original) An expansion tube according to claim 1, wherein an interval of the adjacent left and right expansion slits is the width or less than each expansion slit with respect to the inner peripheral surface of the expansion tube.
6. (original) An expansion tube according to claim 1, wherein an interval between the adjacent upper and lower expansion slits is in a range of 1/5 to 1/1 of the length of each expansion slit.
7. (original) An expansion tube according to claim 1, wherein the plurality of the expansion slits have the same intervals.
8. (original) An expansion tube according to claim 1, wherein the plurality of expansion slits have lengths gradually increased along a direction to which the heat shrinkable tube is manufactured.

9. (original) An expansion tube according to claim 8, wherein each of the plurality of expansion slits is in a generally rectangular shape.

10. (currently amended) An expansion tube according to claim [[1]]8, wherein each of the plurality of expansion slits has a width in a range of 1 mm to 3 mm.

11. (original) An expansion tube according to claim 8, wherein each of the plurality of expansion slits has a larger length in a range of 2.5 times to 5 times than the width thereof in an expansion section and a larger length in a range of 3.5 times to 10 times than the width thereof in a cooling section.

12. (original) An apparatus for manufacturing a heat shrinkable tube, having an expansion tube, comprising: a denser that is adapted to receive a heat shrinkable tube, while preventing the heat shrinkable tube from being loose; dry heating rolls that are adapted to heat the heat shrinkable tube ejected from the denser; an expansion chamber that is adapted to expand the heat shrinkable tube ejected from the dry heating rolls; a caterpillar that is adapted to have the heat shrinkable tube constant in diameter; and a bobbin that is adapted to wind the heat shrinkable tube ejected from the caterpillar, wherein the expansion chamber comprises the expansion tube in which the heat shrinkable tube is expanded to predetermined radius, a vacuum pump for discharging the air in the expansion tube, a cooling water pump for supplying cooling water to the expansion tube, a plurality of cooling water nozzles for spraying cooling water supplied from the cooling water pump, and a vacuum suction hole disposed between the wall surface of a body of the expansion chamber and the vacuum pump, for discharging the air in the expansion tube to the outside of the expansion chamber, and wherein the expansion tube has a plurality of expansion slits formed on the outer peripheral surface thereof along a longitudinal direction,

each of the expansion slits having a predetermined width and a relatively larger length than the predetermined width.

13. (original) An apparatus for manufacturing a heat shrinkable tube according to claim 12, wherein each of the plurality of expansion slits is in a generally rectangular shape.

14. (original) An apparatus for manufacturing a heat shrinkable tube according to claim 12, wherein each of the plurality of expansion slits has a width in a range of 1 mm to 3 mm.

15. (original) An apparatus for manufacturing a heat shrinkable tube according to claim 12, wherein each of the plurality of expansion slits has a larger length in a range of 2.5 times to 5 times than the width thereof.

16. (original) An apparatus for manufacturing a heat shrinkable tube according to claim 12, wherein an interval of the adjacent left and right expansion slits is the width or less of each expansion slit with respect to the inner peripheral surface of the expansion tube.

17. (original) An apparatus for manufacturing a heat shrinkable tube according to claim 12, wherein an interval between the adjacent upper and lower expansion slits is in a range of 1/5 to 1/1 of the length of each expansion slit.

18. (original) An apparatus for manufacturing a heat shrinkable tube according to claim 12, wherein the plurality of the expansion slits have the same intervals.

19. (original) An apparatus for manufacturing a heat shrinkable tube according to claim 12, wherein the plurality of expansion slits have lengths

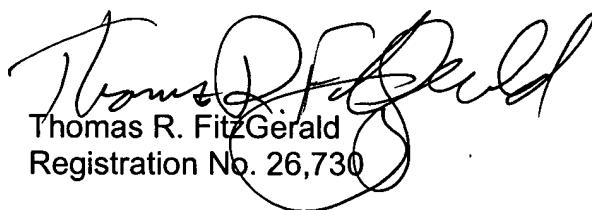
gradually increased along a direction to which the heat shrinkable tube is manufactured.

20. (original) An apparatus for manufacturing a heat shrinkable tube according to claim 19, wherein each of the plurality of expansion slits is in a generally rectangular shape.

21. (original) An apparatus for manufacturing a heat shrinkable tube according to claim 19, wherein each of the plurality of expansion slits has a width in a range of 1 mm to 3 mm.

22. (original) An apparatus for manufacturing a heat shrinkable tube according to claim 20, wherein each of the plurality of expansion slits has a larger length in a range of 2.5 times to 5 times than the width thereof in an expansion section and a larger length in a range of 3.5 times to 10 times than the width thereof in a cooling section.

Respectfully submitted,

  
Thomas R. FitzGerald  
Registration No. 26,730

Date 6/7/04

Law Office of Thomas R. FitzGerald  
16 E. Main Street, Suite 210  
Rochester, New York 14614-1803  
Telephone: (585) 454-2250  
Fax: (585) 454-6364